
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CHALLENGES TO FRANCIS FUKAYAMA'S "END OF HISTORY" THESIS

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Francis Fukayama in his discussion of the Islamist movement and its threat to modernity utilizes a certain "logic of history." Societies through their governments evolve in a gradual, linear process until they reach a final form characterized by liberal, democratic capitalism—the famous "end of history" thesis—as exemplified by Western countries. Fukayama universalizes this conception of history because, according to him, it is based on the scientific method of interpretation, and, thus, proceeds to explain the events in the Muslim/Arab world through this prism of historiography. However, it is the purpose of this paper to challenge Fukayama's language of history as being more ideological rather than scientific, and posit an alternate and more scientific model of historiography as developed by Manuel De Landa. Various interpretations of the Islamist movement provide support for De Landa's method of looking at history. On a more practical level, the failure of several development projects shows the danger of taking on the neo-liberal, market-oriented vision as the ultimate paradigm for societies, as advocated by Fukayama.

Francis Fukayama, in his "Has History Started Again" (2002), is back to arguing his famous "the end of history" thesis: "... History understood as the evolution of human societies through different forms of government had culminated in modern liberal democracy and market-oriented capitalism" (2002: 3). Within this context Fukayama asserts that the September 11 attacks were a "desperate backlash" against modernity. Apparently, Islam is the one culture in the world that has inherent conflicts with Western

institutions. This argument is based on an underlying theory of history. History for Fukayama is a linear, evolutionary process that culminates in a final and permanent form. The purpose of this paper is to challenge this conception of history by putting forth an alternate non-linear, non-equilibrium (i.e., history does not have an end state) model, as developed by Manuel De Landa (2000). First, I will present the criticisms and limitations of Fukayama's concept of history as posed by different theorists. De Landa's theory will be presented as the alternate language of history that answers the legitimate concerns of those who oppose Fukayama's logic of history. As support for De Landa's scheme of historiography, I will refer to several interpretations of the Islamist movement, both as a general social phenomenon and one that is specific to Turkey, taking into account, among other things, the role of women within this movement. Finally, I would also like to look at two studies that illustrate some of the contradictions and challenges faced by development projects that take neo-liberalism as their absolute ideological paradigm.

Fukayama puts forth his "logic of history": Western institutions and the values they espouse—democracy, individual rights, the rule of law, and wealth that results from economic freedom—are ultimately universal values that the world will aspire to and make their own if given the opportunity. Like a good positivist, Fukayama invokes the scientific method in explaining the universality of Western institutions. He states, "There is an underlying historical mechanism that encourages a long-term convergence across cultural boundaries, first and most powerfully in economics, then in the realm of politics and finally (and most distantly) in culture" (2002: 4). Science and technology are the basis for the economic and military success of the West and thus the driving force of history. As a result all countries must accept that in order to progress they need to incorporate the methods that have made Western societies so powerful. Non-Western countries will need to develop Western institutions in order to effectively apply science and technology in their societies.

Historically, according to Fukayama, economic development engenders the growth of democracy. A middle class forms with

private property, and its appropriate legal protections, which then leads to the formation of a complex civil society propped up by an improving educational system. Another great historical innovation was the separation of church and state, devised specifically to maintain the peace of a new and dynamic civil society. Fukayama notes that secularization was an indispensable aspect of modernization, "a great tradition that culminated in the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution" (2002: 4-5).

Fukayama believes that Islamic cultures, particularly Arab countries, have very real problems with modernity. They are the ones that have had consistent radical movements which oppose Western policies and, more fundamentally, religious tolerance, "the basic principle of modernity of itself" (2002: 5). As a result, Fukayama argues, the Islamic world today is at the same historical juncture as Europe during the Thirty Years War of the seventeenth century. Radical Islamists have gained popularity because they are offering alternatives to the social dislocations brought about by mass urbanization, the concomitant change in values, and the inability of their governments to bring about economic and political reforms, despite the genuine assistance of international agencies such as the World Bank.

Clearly, Fukayama sees history as a linear process of evolution. Developments engender further developments giving complexity and dynamism to society until it reaches a final political and economic form with a befitting culture. Western Europe and the United States apparently have reached this ultimate state. My problem with Fukayama's discussion of history is that it seems to be directed by an "invisible hand," much like Adam Smith's free market system. History has a plan and destiny, as if designed by a divine entity. Consequently, Fukayama's vision and language of history takes on a moral quality. Furthermore, this view of history is also a very Eurocentric one; modernity takes on a very selective definition, based on the "best" developments in European history since the seventeenth century. Slavery, racism, imperialism, colonialism, the holocaust, apartheid, etc., are excluded from playing a role in this definition, and must be perceived as aberrations in the straight march of progress. Nevertheless, according to Fukayama, the radical Islamist movement is not a simple aberration; it is

a clash of civilizations a la Samuel Huntington. The Islamists pose a genuine threat to the full realization of the final (and moral) form of society for the countries of the world, the evolution of Western-style liberal democracies. The West must save the world and the Islamic societies from themselves. That is why Fukayama dares to ask the question, "Has History Started Again?"

In response to Fukayama's question, I agree with Lila Abu-Lughod (2002) who argues that we must be distrustful of such messages of salvation: ". . . we need to be suspicious when neat cultural icons are plastered over messier historical and political narratives, so we need to be wary when Lord Cromer in British-ruled Egypt, French ladies in Algeria, and Laura Bush, all with military troops behind them, claim to be saving or liberating Muslim women" (785). Abu-Lughod is advocating for a new language of history, one that calls for understanding the complex links between the different histories of the world, and doing away with "artificially" created geographical spheres where the world is divided between the "civilized," and comfortably familiar cultures, and the "uncivilized," wholly alien cultures.

Nilufer Gole (1998), who has done work in Istanbul and Hong Kong trying to understand "non-Western modernities," discovered that history does not follow the simple linear narrative of "causal sequences" as utilized by Fukayama. "Instead, modernization proceeded asymmetrically according to the specific interaction between the local cultural fabric and the universal concept of modernity" (Gole 1998: 40). As a result, modernity needs a new definition taking into account the interaction between local situations and global influences, and, according to Gole, the language of social science has not incorporated this method of conceiving modernity. Social science engages in parochialisms when confronting complex, hard-to-explain realities in history. The social scientific use of language needs to break with the Enlightenment tradition of conceiving the world solely in terms of particular Western values as indicated by Fukayama. Gole writes, "In order to arrive at new prisms of analysis, we need to further de-center the West itself and look at what once were considered peripheries as centers in their own right, with their own capacity for creating history" (41).

S. Sayyid (1998) has done an analysis on Western historiography, incorporating the work of Edward Said. Sayyid points out that the Orientalist could speak for the Orient because of the language he uses, which is based on science, rationality, and progress. Supposedly, this language could be used to "translate" and "transcribe" other languages. The Orientalist emerged from a "super-cultural formation" largely put into place by Western imperialism. Consequently, the universalism of Western values is the result of its political and military success, and its historiography is the product of the arrogance that comes with success. Therefore, "[t]he universalism of the West is a consequence of historiography and not, as it is too often claimed, a matter of history" (396).

De Landa (2000) provides a philosophy and language of history that answers the concerns of Abu-Lughod, Gole, and Sayyid, and he does so using the scientific method of language that Fukayama claims to use in explaining the historical superiority of Western institutions. However, De Landa attacks the conventional conception of scientific theories as being too simplistic in its notion of historical processes:

... the classical versions of these theories incorporated a rather weak notion of history into their conceptual machinery: both classical thermodynamics and Darwinism admitted only one possible historical outcome, the reaching of thermal equilibrium or the fittest design. In both cases, once this point was reached, historical processes ceased to count. In a sense, optimal design or optimal distribution of energy represented an end of history for these theories. (13-14)

De Landa looks at more contemporary theories in science that explain the possibility of a multiplicity of historical outcomes and an ongoing, dynamic interaction between these outcomes. He bases his theories on innovative work in the area of thermodynamics. He makes reference to Ilya Prigogine and his revolutionary discovery in the 1960s that classical theories in thermodynamics were only valid for closed systems. In this case energy is always conserved, resulting in thermal equilibrium. But, if energy is introduced or taken out of the system, pushing the system away from equilibrium, the

number of possible outcomes increases greatly. Consequently, “[i]nstead of a unique and simple form of stability, we now have multiple coexisting forms of varying complexity (static, periodic, and chaotic attractors)” (2000: 14). In addition, when there are transformations between stable states, there are “bifurcations,” a point at which minor fluctuations in energy can play a very significant role in determining outcomes. Therefore, according to De Landa, “. . . when we study a given physical system, we need to know the specific nature of the fluctuations that have been present at each of its bifurcations; in other words, we need to know its history in order to understand its current dynamical state” (2000: 14).

These conditions are also true for biological systems. De Landa points out that bifurcations and phases are part of any system in which its movements of energy are far removed from equilibrium and “nonlinear,” that is, containing processes that involve powerful interactions and feedback between the different components of that system. Nonlinear dynamics within biology signifies that there can be no ultimate design as a result of the evolutionary process as long as there is energy flowing and ensuring the sudden changes of state and periods of stability within a complex interactive system. De Landa writes:

As biology begins to include these nonlinear dynamical phenomena in its models—for example, the mutual stimulation involved in the case of evolutionary “arms races” between predators and prey—the notion of a “fittest design” will lose its meaning. In an arms race there is no optimal solution fixed once and for all, since the criterion of “fitness” itself changes with the dynamics. As the belief in a fixed criterion of optimality disappears from biology, real historical processes come to reassert themselves once more. (14)

Clearly, then, the dynamism of human history must signify that “the end of history” for human societies also loses its meaning.

De Landa argues that the growing historical concerns within the natural sciences gives us powerful clues for a nonlinear and nonequilibrium vision of history. First of all, according to De Landa, the concept of “stages” in human history needs to be done away

with, at least as it is traditionally understood. Phase transitions do not bring about developmental "stages" that is an improvement from the previous one, which has been completely left behind. De Landa indicates, "On the contrary, much as water's solid, liquid, and gas phases may coexist, so each new human phase may simply add itself to the other ones, coexisting and interacting with them without leaving them in the past" (2000: 16). Moreover, phases may revert to previous ones if the conditions so warrant. So, with the varying flows of energy, we have the possibility of different phases of history, which not only simultaneously exist in varied complexities but also interact. De Landa provides a simple example which he draws from the physicist Arthur Iberall: when nomadic societies did "solidify" as during the rule of Genghis Khan, the "resulting structure was more like glass than crystal, more amorphous and less centralized" (2000: 16). However, for De Landa, this is too simple a metaphor because "inorganic matter-energy has a wider range of alternatives for the generation of structure than just these simple phase transitions, and what is true for simple 'stuff' must be all the more so for the complex materials that form human cultures" (2000: 16). The question that remains now is how well this language of history fits the reality of "non-Western modernities," and more specifically the Islamist movement.

According to Gole (1998), state-instituted modernization projects in non-Western countries, such as the Kemalist project in Turkey, has meant precisely the coexistence of the different periods of history. She writes:

What Akbar Abbas has written about Hong Kong could be said of Istanbul as well: "A space traversed by different times and speeds, where change has no clear direction . . . a weakening of the sense of historical sequentiality so that old and new are contemporaneous. Continuities and discontinuities exist side by side. Premodern and postmodern join hands without having to acknowledge each other." (41)

The Islamist movement is indeed the result of interactions between the old and the new, but more a product of "modernization" than a desire to return to past traditions (Gole 1998, Dorraj 1999). Many

of the participants of this movement are the product of “modern” secular and urban institutions like universities. There is also a clear influence of Western thinkers in their writings (Gole 1998). They are considered fundamentalist because they do preach a closer following of the Koran and the way Islam was practiced during the time of the Prophet, but this fundamental approach is also used to attack the way Islam has been followed and interpreted during the many centuries succeeding the Prophet in order to effectively politicize their movement (Gole 1998, Dorraj 1999, Houston 1999). In terms of the experience of women, the Islamist’s method covering of women is also innovative, plus women have become active and key players within the movement, which is a break from the traditional notion of the subservient female (Gole 1998, Dorraj 1999, Kaya 2000). Interestingly, and in accordance with De Landa’s theories on historical coexistence and interaction, the Islamist movement is replete with “hybrid ways of life” (Gole 1998), which arise directly from the movement’s attempt to come to terms with the social challenges created by “modernization” (Gole 1998, Dorraj 1999, Houston 1999).

Manochehr Dorraj (1999) provides a lucid interpretation of the rise of the Islamist movement within the context of the social upheavals inflicted by the contemporary globalized economy. Developing countries have not been able to effectively withstand the social and cultural disruptions caused by rapid industrialization, urbanization, and population growth. These states have not had the political and economic capital to respond to serious social problems and as a result are having to face growing popular unrest. The imposition of Western cultural values as part of modernization schemes seem to many in these societies as inauthentic and cause greater psychological and social disaffection, which in turn lead to greater political instability. Thus, Dorraj (1999) writes, “. . . prevailing fragmentation and alienation, as well as the pauperization and migration of marginalized groups which often accompany the process of uneven economic growth and political development, give rise to a longing for a sense of community and belonging” (227). Religious revivalists are reacting to this situation: they see modern capitalist society providing greater material

comfort, but robbing their societies of important moral values and, thus, breaking down their communities. Dorraj points out that religious leaders often see themselves as “guardians of a culture,” and seeing their culture threatened, “they may resort to the self-defense mechanism of reviving and revitalizing ties with the past. Through moral regeneration, they attempt to unite the community on the basis of a new discipline” (227). Traditional religious institutions, such as the mosque, come to utilize “modern” methods of mass mobilization and mass action, often giving new political interpretations to Koranic scripture and, in that way, breaking with traditional Islamic practices. The Islamist movement is, thus, clearly a modern phenomenon: as Dorraj writes, “it is not surprising that in the age of mass ideology and mass politics, the populist rendition of faith has become a universal phenomenon” (228).

Another factor of the Islamist movement that reflects “modern” methods, as Dorraj indicates, is the use of civil-society organizations to counter the extreme sense of powerlessness and inferiority that come with poor social conditions. Gole (1998) calls this a “civil society-centered modernization from below” (40), as opposed to state-sponsored modernization programs such as Kemalism in Turkey. In the Muslim world there has been a growth of mosques, Islamic banks, health clinics, Islamic seminaries, guilds, and other associations. According to Dorraj, “In the context of the impersonality of modern life and the pervading social Darwinism of the market place, these communal-based organizations also offer “a new consciousness, sense of self-worth, and capacity for action among the poor people” (1999: 232). Therefore, we can see the hybrid ways of life and their interaction creating a new movement. This fits very well into De Landa’s (2000) philosophy of history. “Modern” economic forces and powerful social and cultural transformations associated with modernity have sparked movements that emphasize certain aspects of tradition, but also look to de-traditionalize much of Islamic practice in order to employ “modern” methods of mass mobilization in an attempt to politicize their message. This hybridity is strongly emphasized by those who make up the Islamist movement: these are often young people—those who are already a product of the cross-mixing be-

tween tradition and modernity in their upbringing—emerging from secular, Western-style institutions, such as the universities, and many of these activists are women, the portion of the population that is not supposed to be assertive nor have an active public role according to traditionally held Islamic beliefs.

A more specific, country-based analysis of the Islamist movement further reflects the complex interaction between different aspects of histories. Turkey, in light of recent elections, where a party with Islamist roots won a strong majority of seats in parliament, is widely seen as struggling with its “traditional” Islamic identity and Western modernity. But, according to Christopher Houston’s (1999) analysis, Islamist movement in Turkey “is subject to all the compromises, contradictions and pressures that any social movement falls prey to while involved in political and economic struggle” (88). Houston points out the higher Islamist message of brotherhood among Muslims has been corrupted by nationalist sentiments in the guise of Islamic belief. The Islamists at times have promoted an anti-Kurdish agenda. This is interesting considering that they explicitly claim to be against the Turkish state’s nationalist scheme. The Kurdish Islamists, in turn, have been emphasizing their own ethnic Muslim identity. Moreover, Houston adds, in the process of preaching against the West as the alien “other,” the Islamists seem to be quite willing to adopt capitalist business methods without reservation, in the process creating an Islamic middle-class, “a professional Islamist counter-elite” (1999: 94), apart from their intellectual leaders. This, in turn, leads to an Islamist discourse that has to address modern issues of class antagonisms.

Houston’s interpretation of the apparent contradictions above fits in well with Weber’s discussion on routinization of highly charged religious movements. The radical Islamist message preaches an all-consuming, absolutist message in the name of uniting a community of believers. However, the need to apply their ideology to the every-day practical concerns of society means opening up alliances with more moderate Muslims and other non-communist groups, and the necessity to deal with issues of modernity—i.e., class, gender, and ethnicity—means also being somewhat transformed by these issues. According to Houston, “In the *practice* of

Islam, the religious movement is attempting to translate the modern day, socially, historically, into that religion. But as with all successful translations, the movement runs the risk of transforming its own syntax in the process" (1999: 94). Indeed, the recently elected Islamist-based Justice Party in Turkey has been calling themselves "Muslim democrats" in a deliberate attempt to make parallels to the Christian Democratic party in Europe. Again, what we are seeing is a profound interaction of different historical traditions (Turkish republican, Islamic, and Kurdish) and in the process creating new ones, much in the vein of De Landa's non-linear and non-equilibrium historical processes.

Ibrahim Kaya's (2000) study on the role of women in the Turkish Islamist movement provides a further example of the interactions of different traditions. The "veiled women" in this movement are predominantly urbanized and educated, and, according to Kaya, there are several factors that inform their participation and activism. These factors are the different histories that have influenced the social existence of women in Turkish society. One is the consciousness of a Turkish past before Islam. Turks come from shamanistic, nomadic origins. The social life of early Turkic communities was highly egalitarian and women played a major part in daily activities. Even later, when Turkic communities had already settled in Anatolia and converted to Islam during the Ottoman Empire, Kaya emphasizes that at the village level original forms of Turkish life still prevailed. It also seems very likely that as nomads Turks were quick to pick up and adopt aspects of the religious life of local Christian communities. This provides another explanation for the heterodox Islamic practices of Anatolian Turks. Turkish women were not at all veiled, as was the custom in the center of Islamic life. Kaya writes, "This diversity of cultural background may help to understand why it was relatively easier to let women assert public roles in the Turkish experience compared with any other Islamic, and in particular Arabic, societies" (2000: 202). Moreover, the Kemalist modernist project also promoted greater female participation in public life. Women were granted the right to vote in 1934.

The different historical traditions—the pre-Islamic, the local Anatolian, and the republican—have interacted in ways that have

influenced the participation of women in the new Islamist movement. This movement, as pointed out, has become a political one in response to the difficult social and economic conditions of contemporary life. Within this context, veiled women have become “highly militant political actors” (Kaya 2000: 205). The redefinition of Islam as a political movement has meant the emergence of contradictions. As Kaya points out, though veiled women accept prescribed roles in society (“inequality,” as Kaya argues it), these women are out there arguing against the lack of democracy of the Turkish state. They are pushing for full democratic reforms. Veiled university women are also fighting for the right to make their own choices, particularly on the issue of wearing the *hijab* on public university campuses. Clearly, the message of Islamist women and their means of activism reflect a profound interaction with “modernity” and other historical traditions, creating a new historical movement. If anything, the contradictions in the movement reflect the ongoing process of interaction taking place between the varied traditions.

Finally, as we have seen, Fukayama’s vision of history in essence asserts an absolute moral vision of a just society. The implicit assumption is that if countries around the world would just accept the liberal capitalist model of the West, they would look like Western Europe and North America (excluding Mexico) politically, economically, and culturally (Colburn 2002). This assumption, of course, is very simplistic and naïve. The future of any country is shaped by its own historical idiosyncrasies, and the interaction of these with both regional and global historical forces. However, development projects around the world, directed by both international organizations and governments with the aid of social scientists, have taken on free-market liberalism as their sole paradigm. As a consequence of their narrow vision, these programs have had some serious negative impacts on the communities that they were supposed to help.

Indeed, Julia Elyachar (2000), in her fieldwork in Cairo is one ethnographer who has been able to assess the anti-poverty programs funded by international organizations (IOs). She looks at the apparently failed “empowerment” schemes the World Bank and NGOs

have engaged in since the 1980s. The idea behind these schemes is to directly help the “people” by providing micro-loans, funded by the World Bank and other development agencies, to the poor, low-level entrepreneurs—especially women—of the developing world. Elyachar points out that the intent of the international organizations is to support the informal economies of these countries. According to her, “The informal economy is a term that signifies a social space in which objects, services, and money are exchanged accordingly to rules of the game other than those sanctioned by the state” (2002: 496). Thus, she adds, development programs, whether intentional or not, are diminishing the presence of the state by expanding the social space of the informal economy, forming a de-facto free market liberated from the controls of the state.

Elyachar emphasizes that this notion of development for the “people” in the form of small businesses has become a moral imperative, because free-market capitalism has become the ideal in the post-communist era. NGOs, via micro-loans, support individuals so that they can help themselves and their communities. NGOs are then deemed as the representatives of the local communities. Elyachar states, “On the level of politics they [NGOs] are often taken to collectively represent ‘civil society.’ On the level of economy, NGOs are often taken to represent the informal economy” (2002: 497-498). The NGOs are responsible for doling out micro-loans given by the IOs and other agencies, and are also in charge of the collection of interest payments for the banks. Elyachar sarcastically writes, “Although it might seem odd to speak of market-rate bank interest in the same breath as empowerment, such is the praxis of micro lending: only market-rate interest builds sustainable NGOs, and only market-rate interest allows client self-respect” (2002: 498).

Elyachar through her interviews in Egypt reveals how the financial institutions easily exploit the micro-loan system, while at the same time putting up the illusion that economic activity is being generated in the country. Egyptian banks create micro-loans out of long-term, low-interest grants, or essentially “charity,” as Elyachar calls it. The grants then get converted into loans with market-rate interest. “Even before any enterprises are established,

the economy appears to have grown” (Elyachar 2002: 498). NGOs, which have won the confidence of local social networks, then become a cheap way of collecting interest payments, and the banks bring in their profits.

Transnational companies have also found ways to manipulate the system for profit. Elyachar makes reference to the famous micro-lending Grameen Bank of Bangladesh and its signing of a contract with the multinational agricultural firm Monsanto which genetically engineers seeds. Monsanto’s plan was to use the “microloan credit networks,” established by Grameen Bank, to distribute its seeds, collect their payments, and take disciplinary action against those farmers who wanted to reproduce their own seeds for planting rather than buying from Monsanto. Elyachar points out that Monsanto’s scheming has revealed that NGOs, through their inroads into local communities as part of the micro-loan process, ironically have become enforcers of big business, rather than supporters of the people.

What went wrong with the empowerment idea? Elyachar blames much of this on anthropologists, who, through their studies of the impoverished in the developing world, have shown a remarkable admiration for the survival strategies of the poor. Specifically, anthropologists emphasized the mutual support social networks found in the local cultures. This aspect of the local cultures soon came to be seen as an economic advantage. Social scientists also saw this aspect of the culture as economically promising. The informal economy then became recognized by the World Bank as a means to battle poverty. Studies were undertaken to understand the survival techniques embedded in the informal economy. These techniques could then be taught to NGOs and lenders. As a result, writes Elyachar, “. . . backward cultural practice is enshrined as a way for the poor to help themselves *and* the economy at the same time. Unlike earlier methods of development, this approach displays no attempt to transform craftspeople in Egypt” (2002: 500). In actuality, the idea is to exploit local peoples by putting them into debt. In fact, many of the micro-entrepreneurs, after the establishment of the social fund in Egypt in 1995, “were desperate. They had debt over their heads, banks on their backs

demanding interest payments and refusing to release further installments of the entrepreneur's loans" (Elyachar 2002: 504). Contracts with borrowers also stipulated in some cases that those late with payments would be taken to jail.

Elyachar clearly indicates that anthropologists and NGOs both failed the local people. Social scientists interjected certain value judgments while carrying out their study of poverty. The anthropologists made their admiration for the self-help social networks of local communities quite well known. This emphasis on "local culture" got taken up by the World Bank and NGOs and incorporated into the prevailing Western neo-liberal, civil society discourse of economic development. There were, after all, no other seriously considered ideological alternatives. Thus, the impoverished local communities were turned over, without any preparation, to the exploitative and competitive world capitalist free-market. As a result, local entrepreneurs became indebted rather than empowered.

Like Elyachar, Arturo Escobar (1997) in his study of the growing black indigenous movement of the Pacific Coast region of Colombia, a rainforest area of incredible biodiversity, strongly asserts the importance of incorporating alternative ideologies in development projects in order to ensure the health and viability of local communities. Indeed, state-initiated development projects have already had a devastating impact on the people of this area, and the possibility of more is imminent according to Escobar.

The state began pushing for development in the Pacific Coast region in the early 1980s with the launching of the Plan for the Integral Development of the Pacific Coast (PLADEICOP) in 1983. This plan was designed and put into play by the regional development corporation, the Autonomous Corporation of the Cauca (CVC), which was founded with money from the World Bank in the 1950s. The government's plans did not include any accounting of local cultures and conditions. After 1990, the state embarked on a more "ambitious" plan for the economic opening-up known as Plan Pacífico, which Escobar claims will have a more "devastating" impact, because it is yet more ill-concerned with the well-being of the local cultures in its zeal for capitalist development. Therefore, black and indigenous communities are opposed to the

plan; they see the language of the plan as threatening in that it wants to pillage the rich natural resources of the region.

Since state-initiated development projects have begun, there has been investment in new directions, such as African palm plantations for oil production, artificial shrimp cultivation, hearts of palm canning, coastal and offshore fishing, shrimp and fish processing and packaging for export, and tourism. These investments, argues Escobar, “[are] producing noticeable cultural ecological, and social transformations, most visible perhaps in the Tumaco region . . .” (1997: 209). For instance, he points out that land for the African palm plantations have been taken by force from black farmers in some cases and by purchase in others. The result has been “massive displacement from the land and intensive proletarianization” (Escobar 1997: 209). Workers work as low-wage laborers on the plantations, and women work in the shrimp and fish packaging plants in Tumaco. Each day there is mass migration of laborers from the river areas to the towns and plantations at pre-dawn, and at night they return without being able to farm their own plots. In addition, because of the dramatic growth of population, poverty has taken on different forms with the crowding of slums such as in Tumaco, whose population has doubled in less than a decade. The built-up of infrastructure for the new economy has also meant a disruption in the “fragile” balance of the river/sea ecosystem. Consequently, Escobar states, “Science and capital thus operate as apparatuses of capture that have remade and disciplined the landscape, money, and labor alike in one single, complex operation” (1997: 9). The political reaction to all this has come in the form of a new black elite who want to have some say in the development projects and in the process “modernize” their culture and institutions.

Escobar utilizes a language of history similar to the one advocated by De Landa in describing the black ethnic movement of the Colombian littoral. He states, “New ecological, cultural, and political orders are continuously being crafted at the local level as communities are brought into the politics of development, capital, and expert knowledge. There is a connection between history, identity, and meanings” (Escobar 1997: 213). The indigenous cultures

of the rainforest have very different cultural-ecological patterns than that called for by Western modernity. Escobar points out that the extent that local cultures will be able to determine the future of the rainforest in their favor depends on the strength of their social movements, the degree they can appropriate new meanings and utilize them for their own purposes, and link them to "other identities, circuits of knowledge, and political projects" (1997: 213-214). This sounds much like the Islamist movement, particularly as it is taking shape in Turkey, which is in the process of linking different historical traditions in order to more effectively articulate a political objective.

In conclusion, Fukayama's logic and language of history needs to be rejected, if for no other reason than its claim to be universal. Its "universalism" stems from the belief that this understanding of history is based on the scientific method: history is a linear evolutionary process of developmental stages engendering later stages of greater complexity until a final form (equilibrium) is reached, thus "the end of history." However, this view of the scientific method is ultimately a very simplistic one, as De Landa (2000) illustrates. He looks at the processes of thermodynamics and biological evolution but in an open system, as opposed to a closed system in the classic (Fukayaman) sense. An open system is not about "stages" that lead to "better" (notice the value-laden term) and more developed stable forms, leaving earlier "stages" completely behind. It is a question of multiple-existing forms of differing complexities that can lead in new directions with just minor fluctuations in energy. It is a complex interactive system that, as long as there is energy coursing through the system, can result in new outcomes. This new language of history is supported by the various interpretations of the Islamist movement. This social phenomenon is the result of the intermixing of various historical realities. Some of these have to do with broad historical identities such as "modernity" and the varied and complex social and political aspects associated with this term, and Islam, its practices and values. Other realities have to do with more specific pre-Islamic identities and local cultural conditions. The result is a contemporary movement that is detraditionalizing Islam and positing a dif-

ferent direction in politics. In other words, it is a movement that is much more dynamic than the simple labels of “anti-Western or “anti-modern” imply. Furthermore, these labels reflect a dismissive attitude that could only come by taking on Fukayama’s Western liberal democracy and market-oriented capitalism as one’s ultimate social, and moral, paradigm. The study of different development projects reveal the damage a narrow vision can have on local communities. The practical application of policy requires a scheme of analysis as outlined by De Landa.

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